

A black and white photograph of Dmitri Shostakovich seated at a piano. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, a patterned tie, and round-rimmed glasses. He is looking towards the camera with a serious expression. His hands are positioned on the piano keys. A large sheet of music is open on the piano stand to his left. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some indistinct shapes.

Shostakovich
plays...
Shostakovich

GENUINE STEREO LAB

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Digitals

Shostakovich plays... Shostakovich (1955-1957)

CD1

FROM JEWISH FOLK POETRY, op.79 (1948)

24:14

1. I. *Lament for A Dead Child / Lamentation sur la mort d'un jeune enfant* 02:48
Die Klage über das tote Kind
2. II. *The Thoughtful Mother and Aunt / Les petits soins de Maman & Tantine* 01:54
Die sorgsame Mutter und Tante
3. III. *Lullaby / Berceuse / Wiegenlied* 03:21
4. IV. *Before a long separation / Avant une longue absence / Vor der langen Trennung* 02:48
5. V. *A warning / Avertissement / Eine Warnung* 01:08
6. VI. *The abandoned Father / Le Père abandonné / Der im Stich gelassene Vater* 02:08
7. VII. *Song of Hardship / La misère / Das Lied über die Not* 01:24
8. VIII. *Winter / Hiver / Winter* 03:10
9. IX. *The good life / La belle Vie / Ein gutes Leben* 01:19
10. X. *Young girl's song / Chanson de jeune fille / Das Lied eines jungen Mädchen* 02:36
11. XI. *Happiness / Le Bonheur / Das Glück* 01:26

Recorded live in Moscow, 15 January 1955

PIANO CONCERTO No.2 in F major, Op.102 (1957)

16:16

12. I. *Allegro* 06:12
13. II. *Andante* 05:09
14. III. *Allegro* 04:55

Recorded live in Moscow, 10 May 1957

PIANO CONCERTO No.1 in C minor, Op.35 (1933)

21:16

15. I. *Allegretto* 06:49
16. II. *Lento – attacca* 05:37
17. III. *Moderato – attacca* 01:22
18. IV. *Allegro con brio* 06:40

Recorded live in Moscow, 27 November 1957

19. CONCERTINO FOR TWO PIANOS, in A minor, Op.94 (1954)

08:03

Adagio – Allegretto

Recorded in Moscow Conservatory, 1957

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 69:04

CD 2

PIANO QUINTET in G major, Op.57 (1940)

29:59

1. *First movement: Prelude, Lento* 04:55
2. *Second movement: Fugue, Adagio* 12:25
3. *Third movement: Scherzo, Allegretto* 03:40
4. *Fourth movement: Intermezzo, Lento* 06:29
5. *Fifth movement: Finale, Allegretto* 05:58

Recorded live in Moscow, 10 May 1957

CELLO SONATA in D minor, Op.40. (1934)

24:21

6. *I. Moderato* 10:48
7. *II. Moderato con moto* 03:06
8. *III. Largo* 07:59
9. *IV. Allegretto* 03:28

Recorded live in Moscow Conservatory, 10 May 1957

PRELUDES (4) Op.34, arranged for violin and piano par Dmitry Tsyganov

05:00

10. *I. No.10 in C sharp minor* 01:47
11. *II. No.16 in B flat minor* 01:06
12. *III. No.15 in D flat* 00:55
13. *IV. No.24 in D minor* 01:10

Recorded in Moscow Conservatory, 1957

PRELUDES and FUGUES, Op.87 (1950-1) (excerpts)

12:14

14. *I. No.5 in D major* 03:03
15. *II. No.23 in F major* 06:09
16. *III. No.3 in G major* 03:02

Recorded in Moscow, May 1957

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 73:06

Dmitry Shostakovich, *piano*

CD1 (1-11) Nina L'volyna Dorliak, Zara Dolukhanova, Alexei Maslennikov

(12-14) Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Gaouk

(15-18) Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Samuel Samossoud, Josif Volovmk, *trumpet*

(19) Maxim Shostakovich, *piano*

CD 2 (1-5) The Beethoven Quartet: Dmitry Tsyganov, Vassily Shirinsky, Vadim Borissovsky, Sergei Shirinsky

(6-9) Mstislav Rostropovich, *cello*

(10-13) Dmitry Tsyganov, *violin*

A SELF PORTRAIT

The **Concerto in C minor for Piano, Trumpet, and String Orchestra**, Op.35, was completed by Dmitri Shostakovich in 1933. It was an experimentation with a neo-baroque combination of instruments. This concerto was premiered on 15 October 1933 in the season opening concerts of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra with Shostakovich at the piano, Fritz Stiedry conducting, and Alexander Schmidt playing the trumpet solo. 'By all accounts, Shostakovich played brilliantly' and the concerto was well received. The performance was repeated on 17 October. Despite the title, the work might more accurately be classified as a piano concerto rather than a double concerto in which the trumpet and piano command equal prominence. The trumpet parts frequently take the form of sardonic interjections, leavening the humor and wit of the piano passage work. The trumpet does assume relatively equal importance during the conclusion of the last movement, immediately after the cadenza for piano solo. Years after he wrote the work, Shostakovich recalled that he had initially planned to write a concerto for trumpet and orchestra and then added the piano to make it a double concerto. As he continued writing, it became a piano concerto with a solo trumpet. The composer was playing very often this provocative 'classical' concerto. The present recording stays the last approved before the remake in Paris with André Cluytens.

The circumstances surrounding the composition of the **Cello Sonata** Op.40 remain obscure, but it was probably written between 14 August and 19 September 1934 at the pressing request of a friend

who often put him up at the time, the cellist-impresario Viktor Kubatsky. He and Shostakovich gave the first performance on Christmas Day of the same year in the small hall of the Leningrad Conservatory, but the composer was not fully satisfied with his work, in particular the concluding *Allegro*. Thus, it was not until 1971 that the basic edition (OC 38) would be available, followed by the posthumous one (1982), which took into account the last modifications, including those suggested by Mstislav Rostropovich after having performed it with the composer the 5 May 1957 reproduced today after a strong remastering in 1956. According to the dedicatee, the opening *Allegro non troppo* was the result of two nights of insomnia following a quarrel Shostakovich had just had with his wife, Nina, who abruptly went back to Leningrad. The cello opens the dialogue with a serene, almost Tchaikovskian, melody, which develops smoothly. The essential idea of the linked *tranquillo* features for the first time a motif that will be found, developed, in the famous *Fifth Symphony* to come. The cello becomes the interpreter of successive emotional states, clearly specified by abundant metronome and dynamic markings. They are expressed with as much magnificence as in Miaskovsky's Opus 12: *rubato impetuoso*, frequent alternation of pizzicati and bowing, up to the largo (bar 200), which takes up the opening theme, altered and in an almost tragic tempo. The second *Allegro* is a real scherzo in folk style, not like that illustrated by Schumann (Op.102) but the intentionally ironic and provocative style exploited, for example, in the ballet *The Golden Age* or the opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. The piano is there to mark an almost violent rhythmic pattern, meant to be close to a danced interlude. He uses dynamics going

up to *fff*, whereas the cello executes a few acrobatic figures in the G clef in thumb position over limited glissandos, up to the coda, *marcato*, which is perhaps the first satirical plagiarism of the 'Parisian' Prokofiev. In a complete contrast, the *Largo*, one of Shostakovich's first meditations – which some long considered fresh and lyrical –, offers a monologue à la Pushkin, with the cello replacing the voice, and marked *pppp* (bar 83) for the first time. The finale, *Allegro*, is a sarcastic, rhythmic rondo in which the grotesque and provocation appear through the intervention of the pianist who leads a wild round whereas the cello must wait until bar 227 to impose itself. After this outburst, a form of *moto perpetuo* settles in (*crescendo* in *détaché*), leading to the concluding *risoluto*, which calls for an intensity rarely sustained by the numerous performers who do not readily stray from the Romantic mode according to... Popper.

Anticipating the structure of the *Eighth Symphony*, the **Piano Quintet** Op.57 is in five movements, the central scherzo the only one in a truly lively tempo. In seven bars, the piano sets forth most of the thematic material of the opening prelude in a series of chords of slightly acidic harmony, like a transposition of J.S. Bach's Baroque model as the composer had done in his *24 Preludes*, Op.34 and his *Concerto no.1 for Piano and Trumpet*, Op.35. He thereby avoids the austerity of a solemn prelude whilst preserving an old-style metric. The entrance of the strings takes place as if in an instrumental suite. The development is 'à la française', close to a minuet and blurring the rhetorical appearance of the introduction. It continues on a fugue played by the strings, the piano joining them for a repeat of the opening theme, *lento*, marked by

a symphonic fullness. The next slow movement, an *adagio* fugue, recalls that of Beethoven's *Quartet No.14*, Op.131 and takes no less than 37 bars for the four instruments to construct it, whereas the keyboard settles for underscoring it with an organist's counterpoint. The emotional tension mounts gradually, the melodic motif, repeated and clarified, taking on the pace of a funeral march with whiffs of Orthodox liturgical chant. With increasing solemnity, the keyboard plays on gradations of dynamics and a curious rhythmic pattern of alternating 5/4 and 4/4. A coda, *morendo*, in the extreme registers – low for the piano –, announces the gripping effects of the *Adagio* from the '*Leningrad*' *Symphony*, Op.60. The brief central scherzo, *Allegretto*, re-establishes a certain, almost simplistic, serenity like that of the Op.35 Concerto with its banal melodic theme suggesting a popular refrain. The fourth movement, *Intermezzo*, again slow, returns to the meditative atmosphere of the end of the initial *lento*. In an overall grey halo, two types of discourse are confronted: one with a lyrical key theme, the other choppy and unpredictable, as treated in *staccato* with a few outbursts suddenly animating the landscape. As if in summary, a coda, essentially entrusted to the piano, anticipates the set of themes of the finale. This last *Allegretto*, played *attaca*, contrasts two moods, one of a dramatic, solemn cantata chorale without words, akin to that of the opening *lento*, the other ranging from lyricism to the ironic platitude of the central *Allegretto*, like music to accompany 'pioneer' films. *The Quintet*, Op.57 thus turns out to be a score of classical technique in which Shostakovich already seems to be subjugating an unusual *invention* to a traditional mould, going as far as six voices (two on the keyboard). It was premiered on 23 November

1940 in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatory by the composer and the Beethoven Quartet, reproduced today in this strong remastering edition. These same artists then went toured several provincial cities of a Soviet Union at war but temporarily protected by the Nazi-Soviet Pact

From Jewish Folk Poetry, Op.79, is a song cycle for soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor and piano by Dmitri Shostakovich. It uses texts taken from the collection *Jewish folk songs*, compiled by I. Dobrushin and A. Yuditsky, edited by Y. M. Sokolov (Goslitizdat, 1947). The piece was composed in the autumn of 1948, after Shostakovich's denunciation in the Zhdanov decree of that year. The composer's situation and the official anti-Semitism of the time made a public premiere impossible until January 15, 1955, when it was performed by Shostakovich himself with Nina Lvovna Dorliak, Zara Dolukhanova and Alec Maslennikov, concert reproduced today after a strong remastering. Before the premiere the work received a number of private performances.

The deep sympathy and concern the composer felt for humanity and the plight of the individual is nowhere more clearly revealed than in his songs. One feels the inner compulsion to identify with human suffering, a compulsion which would have emerged regardless of official dictums, which merely served to channel those feelings into acceptable subjects. Strong hints of tragedy may be detected in many of his purely instrumental works, feelings which are intensified, because specified, in much of the vocal music. After the discussions of 1948, Shostakovich was naturally hesitant to vouchsafe anything but the most overtly party line works, one of which was this song cycle, which appeared the

following year. In the first eight songs various aspects of misery and privation in pre-revolutionary Russia are examined while the final three songs show how things changed for the better. The songs are based mainly on folklore verses of the chosen race, but they do not discuss anti-Semitism so much as the general misery of Czarist Russia and the subsequent happy times. These things happen to be related from the Jewish viewpoint. The first song (*soprano; mezzo-soprano*) mourns the passing of a baby that died despite loving care which could not overcome the family's poverty. At first the two voices join in the lament, later alternating amid sorrowing phrases. The second and third songs are linked by subject: a mother and aunt (*soprano; mezzo-soprano*) praise a baby in its pram, while the *Lullaby* (*mezzo-soprano*) brings a strong feeling of sadness as if at the start of a new life in a cruel world. No.4 (*soprano; tenor*) is a dramatic handling of farewell scene between two poor lovers driven apart by circumstances. Up to this time, the piano has taken a largely subservient part in the songs, but in No.5 (*soprano*) the instrument assumes an important role. Again at the start of No.6 (*soprano; tenor*) the piano depicts an old ragman pacing restlessly, after his daughter has gone off to marry a police captain. He pleads in vain for her to return, but she merely shrugs and asks her lover to scare the old Jew away. In No.7 (*tenor*) Shostakovich writes biting satire in a scherzo-like song dealing sarcastically with the meagre life of the poor. The terrors which a Russian winter brings to those with inadequate clothing, food and heating are graphically illustrated in No.8, for all three singers. When not occupied with the melody, the voices harmonise in imitation of a Siberian blizzard, the piano contributing an icy, desolate accompaniment. The last three songs give the opposite picture, after

Socialism has somehow swept away all problems. A happy worker sings of the joys of collective farming (No.9, *tenor*), a merry Jewish girl tells of her full and carefree life (No.10, *soprano*), and all three singers join in No.11 to describe their new-found peace and contentment in the new State. In the final two songs in particular, the composer subtly imparts a characteristic 'Jewishness' to the music, by the use of *acciaccature* in No.6, and by unmistakably middle-Eastern melodic contours in No.11.

Shostakovich had used the *Prelude and Fugue* form as the first movement of his *Piano Quintet* of 1940, where it seems unexpectedly at home. In 1950 the composer had visited the Bach bicentenary celebrations in Leipzig and returned for writing the **Preludes and Fugues op.87**, one in each key, along the lines of Bach's 'Forty-eight', but for semi-private use only. As the compositional process absorbed his mind, the group developed into a work of major importance which was clearly too significant to be restricted to personal study. The today short selection is proposing only: *No.5 in D (Allegretto-Allegretto)*. The *Prelude (Allegretto)* opens with spread right-hand chords which provide a soothing foil to the slow-moving bass line. The piece is a pastoral in all but name, and it provides a complete contrast to the dry, crackling *Fugue (also Allegretto)*, a study in nervous haste. *No.23 in F (Adagio-Moderato con moto)*. Perhaps the most beautiful of the entire set, this *Prelude* opens with a heart-easing melody against which the closely-worked 3-voice *Fugue* seems a little severe. *No.3 in G (Moderato non troppo-Allegro molto)*. A stately opening in double octaves alternates with a rapid agitated counter subject. The *Fugue*, a hectic piece in 6/8 rhythm, is attacked without pause.

The **Preludes, Op.34** are not particularly significant in the 26-year-old composer's output, except as examples of his epigrammatic style in contrast to the expansive mood of his more 'public' works. The first two of the set were composed at the very end of 1932, the rest in 1933 in Leningrad and Moscow. These arrangements by D. Tsyganov for violin and piano were approved by the composer. *No.10 in C sharp minor*, marked *Moderato non troppo*, is gently humorous in style and was dated 22 January 1933, *No.15* from 2 from 2 February 1933, an exercise in grotesque anger, *No.16* from 7 February 1933, a flowing melody disrupted by triplets, *No.24* from 2 March 1933), a limping baseline provides shaky support for a gawky melody, but the piece ends in unexpected tranquillity.

Premiered on November 8, 1954 in Moscow by Maxim Shostakovich and Alla Maloletkova, the **Concertino for Two Pianos op.94** was composed by Shostakovich for his gifted son Maxim, then a 15-year-old student at the Central Music School, the preparatory division of the Moscow Conservatory. Father and son later subsequently recorded the piece, reproduced today. The *Concertino*, tailored in its technique for the advanced student, is laid out in sonata form with introduction. Two sharply contrasted motives – an ominous unison theme in dotted rhythms and a hymn-like strain – alternate in the introduction in a manner reminiscent of the slow movement of Beethoven's *Fourth Piano Concerto* (in which Franz Liszt discerned *Orpheus taming the Furies*). The main theme is in the nature of a zesty march; the second theme turns the dotted rhythms and stepwise motion of the introduction's opening motive into a spirited quick-step. The return of the hymnal phrase from the

introduction provides a bridge to the recapitulation of the earlier themes. The final recall of the hymnal phrase not only marks the arrival at the coda, but also provides a quiet foil for the brief but excited dash to the end.

The **Piano Concerto No.2 in F major**, Op.102 was composed in 1957 for his son Maxim's 19th birthday. Maxim premiered the piece during his graduation at the Moscow Conservatory. It is an uncharacteristically cheerful piece, much more so than most of Shostakovich's works. The work is scored for solo piano, three flutes (third doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, timpani, snare drum and strings. The concerto lasts around 20 minutes and has three movements, with the second movement played *attacca*, thereby moving directly into the third (although the second movement does come to an acceptable resolution in C minor, such that the third movement is not entirely necessary to bring the music to a conclusion). The jolly main theme of the first movement, *allegro*, is played first by the bassoon, then soon accompanied by the clarinets and oboes. The piano enters unobtrusively with an answering theme, played as single notes in both hands an octave apart. This evolves into a march-like theme. A new melodic theme in D minor is then introduced, with unisons two octaves apart on the piano, winding down to nothing. Then, an abrupt blast from the orchestra leads into tumultuous and low jumping octaves on the lower piano, while the orchestra plays a variation on the original piano melody *fortissimo*. The piano builds in a triplet pattern to introduce the D minor theme (now in D major) in an augmentation in a triumphant *tutti*. At the climax, everything comes to a silent pause, and the piano comes in with a fugue-

like counterpoint solo. After a minute of the fugue, the orchestra comes back in, playing the melody in the high winds. The orchestra builds on the main melody while the piano plays scales and tremolos, which lead into a joyous few lines of chords and octaves by the piano, with the main theme finally resurfacing and bringing the movement to a close. The *andante* is subdued and romantic. The mood can be considered tender with a touch of melancholy. Strings start gently in C minor, with a short introduction before the piano comes in with a gentle triplet theme in C major. Although it remains slow throughout, and works within a comparatively small range, it is marked by the recurrence of two- or four-on-three rhythms. The finale *allegro* is a lively dance in duple time, making much use of pentatonic scales and modes. Soon, the second theme is introduced, in 7/8 time, with the piano accompanied by balalaika-like pizzicato strings. These three themes are then developed and interwoven before a final statement of the 7/8 theme and finally a virtuoso coda in F major. This concerto is sometimes dismissed as one of the composer's less important works, especially in comparison to some of the symphonies and string quartets. In a letter to Edison Denisov in mid-February 1957, barely a week after he had finished work on it, the composer himself wrote that the work had 'no redeeming artistic merits'. Despite the apparent simplistic nature of this concerto, the public has always regarded it warmly, and it stands as one of Shostakovich's most popular pieces.

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UN PIANISTE MILITANT

Chostakovitch confiait en 1959 à Grigori Scheerson, musicologue russe, francophone, l'accompagnant alors que le compositeur était en concert et enregistrement à Paris avec l'Orchestre National dirigé par André Cluytens, au cours d'un entretien radiodiffusé, que sa musique de piano, "il la composait d'abord pour lui-même, pour le pianiste qu'il voulait être", "Ce doit être la preuve, ajoutait-il, de ma passion de l'estrade, une passion inassouvie, car j'adore jouer du piano !". Outre de nombreuses pièces de piano, dont il a toujours été le premier interprète, Chostakovitch a effectivement écrit pour lui-même (et ses amis, du Quatuor Beethoven en particulier) le *Quinlette* op.57 et le *Trio avec piano* op.87, ainsi que les deux *Concertos* op.35 et 101 qu'il a souvent joué jusqu'en 1960. Certes, il n'était pas un pianiste 'romantisant', cabotin, au répertoire centré sur Chopin. Pour lui, le piano était d'abord un instrument de formation, puis professionnel lorsqu'il jouait lors de la projection de films muets, mais c'était d'abord un outil de découverte, de travail, d'expérimentation, afin d'analyser les partitions significatives obligées ou récentes, et préparer ses propres compositions. Du fait du nombre impressionnant de musiques de film et de scène qu'il dut produire pour des raisons alimentaires, puis politiques, il ne composait pas au piano comme d'ordinaire mais directement à la table. Il crut longtemps pouvoir mener une carrière de pianiste dès les années 20. Il remporta même une récompense au Concours Chopin de Varsovie en 1927. Son jeu précis, un peu sec, un rythme percutant, des phrases nettement dessinées, une technique sans défaut, - une phénoménale capacité de déchiffrage, telles sont les principales caractéristiques du jeu du pianiste

qu'il fut - et ces caractéristiques se reflètent dans ses compositions. Il use, qu'il s'agisse de pages solistes courtes ou d'importantes partitions avec orchestre - de motifs brefs ou de thèmes profondément originaux conciliant le lyrisme avec un sens aigu du grotesque: contrastes hardis, pouvant opposer des éléments de musique de danse d'une fausse banalité à des moments d'une grande élévation, presque pathétiques, faisant songer à Bach, instrumental ou cantates, et à Beethoven. (dans ses symphonies de pleine maturité). Son ami Isaac Glikman affirma même qu'il était un merveilleux *dessinateur d'après nature*, à savoir un créateur trouvant son inspiration non seulement dans des impressions d'actualité ou dans la littérature, mais parfois dans l'univers musical du quotidien, chansons, danses, rengaines.... Certes il possédait un sens aigu de la dérision, n'hésitait pas à juxtaposer une écriture polyphonique rigoureuse digne de l'exemple de Bach, avec des chants populaires russes, des méditations tragiques, puis, soudain, des musiques de danses d'autrefois ou caricaturant celles d'aujourd'hui.

La **Sonate pour violoncelle et piano** en ré mineur, probablement écrite entre le 14 août et le 19 septembre 1934 à la demande pressante d'un ami qui le logeait souvent à l'époque, le violoncelliste et organisateur de concerts Viktor Kubatski, Chostakovitch la créa avec ce commanditaire le Jour de Noël de la même année dans la petite salle du Conservatoire de Léninegrad. Il n'était pas pleinement satisfait de son ouvrage, en particulier de l'*allegro* final et il a fallu attendre 1971 pour disposer de l'édition de base (OC 38), puis de celle, posthume (1982), qui prenait en compte les dernières modifications, y comprises celles suggérées par Mstislav Rostropovitch après l'avoir exécutée

avec le compositeur en 1956, reproduite aujourd'hui. Le violoncelle ouvre le dialogue dans le *moderato* sur une mélodie sereine, presque tchaïkovskienne, et se décante sans heurt dans le *tranquillo* en chaîné. Il se fait l'interprète d'états émotionnels successifs, clairement précisés par d'abondantes indications métronomiques et de nuances. L'*allegro* second est un vrai scherzo dans le style populaire, volontiers ironique et provocateur. Le piano est là pour marquer une rythmique presque violente, un style qui se veut proche de l'intermède dansé. Il use de nuances dynamiques qui vont jusqu'au *triple forte* tandis que le violoncelle effectue quelques figures acrobatiques en clé de sol jusqu'à la coda, *marcato*, qui est peut-être le premier plagiat satirique du Prokofiev 'parisien'. Par contraste, le *largo* offre avec une des premières méditations de Chostakovitch un monologue à la Pouchkine, dans lequel le violoncelle remplace la voix. Il étrenne l'usage de la nuance *quadruple piano* (mesure 83). L'*allegro* final est un rondo sarcastique dans lequel le grotesque et la provocation apparaissent par le truchement du pianiste qui mène une ronde endiablée alors que le violoncelle doit attendre la mesure 227 pour s'imposer. Après cet éclat s'installe une forme de mouvement perpétuel qui conduit au *risoluto* conclusif exigeant une intensité rarement soutenue comme rarement, le jeune Rostropovitch restant inimitable.

Le **Quintette pour piano et cordes** op.57 est construit sur cinq mouvements, le scherzo central étant le seul de tempo vraiment animé. Le *lento* initial laisse le piano énoncer les sept mesures exprimant l'essentiel du matériau thématique en une suite d'accords à l'harmonie légèrement acidulée, proche de la transposition du modèle baroque de J-S. Bach qu'il avait inaugurée dans les 24 *Préludes* op.34 et

dans le 1^{er} *Concerto pour piano et trompette* op.35. Le développement est "à la française", proche du menuet, se poursuit sur une fugue confiée aux cordes, le piano les rejoignant pour une reprise du thème initial, *lento*, à la plénitude symphonique. Le nouveau mouvement lent, *adagio*, se souvient de la fugue du 14^e *Quatuor* op.131 de Beethoven. La tension émotionnelle monte peu à peu, le motif mélodique répété et décanté prenant une allure de marche funèbre aux relents de chant liturgique orthodoxe. Le clavier joue sur les effets de gradation dynamique et une démarche rythmique curieuse de 5/4 et 4/4 alternés. Une coda, *morendo*, anticipe sur les effets saisissants de l'*adagio* de la *Symphonie* op.60 "Léningrad". Le bref *allegretto* central revient au climat serein, presque trivial, du 1^{er} *Concerto* op.35, avec son thème mélodique simpliste et son aspect de rengaine populaire. L'*intermezzo* revient au climat méditatif de la fin du *lento* initial. Deux lignes de discours s'affrontent, l'une mélodique et continue, l'autre hachée, imprévisible, comme traitée en *staccato*. Le final s'enchaîne et oppose deux climats, l'un dramatique et solennel, proche de l'atmosphère d'une cantate sans paroles, l'autre, serein et naïvement classique de facture, images résumées l'un du *lento* initial, l'autre allant du lyrisme à l'ironique platitude de l'*allegretto* central. Le *Quintette* est créé le 23 novembre 1940 dans la Petite Salle du Conservatoire de Moscou par le compositeur et le Quatuor Beethoven. Regravé aujourd'hui, un concert anniversaire par les mêmes interprètes et dédicataires date du 10 mai 1957. et demeure un exemple émouvant de l'amour de Chostakovitch, pianiste, pour la musique de chambre. **De la poésie populaire juive**, op.79a, forme un cycle de chansons pour soprano, mezzo-soprano, ténor et piano sur des textes tirés des *chansons folkloriques juives*

compilées par I. Dobrushin et A. Yuditsky et éditées par Y. M. Sokolov (Goslitizdat, 1947). Ce cycle a été composé à l'automne 1948, suite à la condamnation de Chostakovitch parmi d'autres compositeurs par le décret de Jdanov. La situation personnelle du compositeur et la politique antisémite de l'époque ont conduit à repousser jusqu'au 15 janvier 1955 sa première publique par Chostakovitch lui-même, au piano, avec Nina Lvovna Dorliak, Zara Dolukhanova et Alec Maslennikov, lors d'un concert organisé pour fêter ses soixante ans. C'est cette création qui est aujourd'hui proposée dans une gravure la plus pure possible. Texte original et traductions multilingues sont disponibles sur Internet.

Une irrésistible joie de vivre, de gaieté rayonnante règnent dans le **Concerto pour piano**, trompette et orchestre à cordes, op.35. L'effectif – un instrument à vent soliste et un simple ensemble de cordes – n'est pas sans évoquer les formations de l'époque de Bach. Une brève introduction, basée sur un thème simple et expressif, semble inviter l'auditeur à une certaine gravité. Mais cela ne dure guère alors qu'apparaît, enchaîné, un motif pour le moins frivole, un thème d'opérette de caractère grotesque. Car Chostakovitch n'hésite pas à introduire dans cet allegro de sonate des épisodes divertissants où résonnent des échos de chansons de rues, le joyeux galops ou de marches rapides. Néanmoins, ce kaléidoscope d'images musicales, traitées à la manière néo-classique, ne nuit apparemment pas à l'unité de l'œuvre, n'aboutit nullement à un mélange, à une salade de styles. Le second se veut un lent épisode lyrique, dont la poésie s'oppose à la truculence de l'allegro liminaire. Après un court intermède *moderato*, voici le finale, *allegro con brio* évoque rythmes de polka, de galop, de fox-trot avec

d'impertinentes citations de Haydn et de Beethoven. Une joyeuse fanfare sert de conclusion brillamment la partition.

Écrit vingt-trois ans plus tard, le **Concerto pour piano No.2**, op.102 a été composé à l'intention de son fils Maxime, pianiste, avant de devenir un excellent chef d'orchestre, qui devait affronter les épreuves d'admission au Conservatoire de Moscou. Pourtant, la véritable création de l'œuvre eut lieu durant l'hiver 1957 avec le compositeur lui-même au piano, rééditée aujourd'hui. Destinée à un jeune artiste débutant, la partition s'efforce d'être relativement simple du point de vue de la technique très claire, pleine d'allant et d'énergie. Le premier est allègre, dynamique, avec une partie soliste où se succèdent des éléments de chansons et de marches, soutenus par un orchestre utilisé d'une manière ample, mais économique, avec de nombreuses trouvailles de jeux de timbres. Ces pages doivent plaire tout autant à l'interprète qu'à l'auditeur. L'*andante* est un véritable nocturne, conforme aux plus belles traditions de l'école romantique. L'*Allegro* final, de même que le premier mouvement, fait alterner des rappels de chansons et de marches, des démonstrations techniques, de divertissantes ruptures rythmiques, une animation débordante. Le pianiste-compositeur en grava une version de référence le 10 mai 1957, reproduite ici.

Ce double disque n'a pas pour vocation d'offrir une intégrale de l'œuvre de piano du maître russe. Outre nombre de petites pièces, de jeunesse, *préludes* et *intermezzo* (1920), les 8 *Préludes* op.2, *Aphorismes* op.13, l'intégrale de l'op.34 et 87, *Cahier d'enfants* op.69, *Polka*, *Fugues*, *Danse des poupées*, les deux *Sonates pour piano*, op.12 (12 décembre 1926) et op.61 (6 juin 1943) sont à ajouter. Malheureusement

l'enregistrement de la création par l'auteur de cet op.69 n'est pas techniquement publiable. Ce tombeau, écrit à mémoire de Leonid Nikolaïev, son professeur de piano, est un véritable cri de rage rendant en pleine guerre hommage à son maître mais également à tous ses amis morts face à l'ennemi déclaré mais surtout disparus sur ordre du pouvoir. Cette partition, courte et dense, est une œuvre d'exception, trop rarement jouée, révélée par Emile Guilels (Praga 250 328).

Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist. by Sofia Moshevich. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004.
Bibliographical sources : Wikipedia
Krzystof Meyer, Dimitri Chostakovitch, Fayard, Paris, 1994

Si ce disque vous a plu., sachez qu'il existe un catalogue des autres références PRAGA disponibles. Consultez notre site www.pragadigitals.com



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Cover: Shostakovich at the piano, Moscow, 1955

Page 12: D.Shostakovich (at left) performing the 'From the Jewish Folk Poetry' in Moscow with N.Dorfiak, Z.Dolulghanova and A.Maslennikov (from center to right)

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